Remarks of
The Honorable Daniel S. Goldin

FY 2001 Budget Press Conference
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Good afternoon . . .

I'm a rational engineer. But the video you just saw paints the real side of America's space program: the emotional side, the human side. That's the side that motivates us at NASA, but we all know it's the numbers that fuel our vision.

The numbers and facts we are unveiling today will not only help revolutionize the space program, but it will also help develop the technologies essential to America's future.

As we do that, we will instill new pride and rekindle the spirit of America — like what we just saw in the video from the Mars team as Pathfinder successfully landed.

Just last week, I met with a handful of reporters. One of the first questions was, What can you tell us about the 2001 budget?

All I could say was, Look at the smile on my face.

Today, I can tell you why.

With this budget we will take on revolutionary new missions, like Living with a Star and the Small Aircraft Transportation System.

We will take the next steps toward a permanent human presence in space.

And we will build on our exciting missions to understand our planet, our solar system, and our universe.

Over the past seven years, we were challenged to operate more safely, more efficiently and at higher levels of performance. The NASA team delivered and will continue to improve.

For the first time in seven years, the NASA budget is going up -- $435 million in 2001.

In 2005, the budget will be $2 billion higher than this year's budget.

For this, all of us at NASA would like to thank the President, the Vice President, OMB Director Jack Lew and our friends in the Congress.

In a way, this process started last year when thousands of Americans called, wrote, and emailed support for their space program.

What do these increases mean?

Today we take the next major step in decreasing our involvement in operations and increasing our investment in cutting-edge R&D.

The best indicator of this change is how we balance our human space flight with our science and aerospace technology investments. Over the past decade, our science and aerospace technology investment went from 31 to 41 percent of our budget.

In the next five years, we will raise our investment to 51 percent.

However, we will never compromise safety — it's our number one priority. That's why I am proud to announce that our Shuttle safety program alone will jump from $600 million to $2.1 billion over the next six year period. This allows us to fly the Shuttle for at least the next decade and roughly double its safety.

Even as we upgrade our Shuttle fleet, we are aggressively investing an even larger sum of money in our number one development priority, the next generation of revolutionary reusable launch vehicles. Over the past seven years, $1.8 billion has gone to this effort.

Now that the pump has been primed, we plan to invest $6 billion over the 2000 to 2005 period.

NASA will continue to do what it does best: develop breakthrough technologies. The private sector will be responsible for their integration into tomorrow's safer and more reliable launch vehicles.

This will ensure that progressive aerospace companies and the emerging launch vehicle industry can compete in this new era of opening up access to space.

To reach our ambitious goals for the future — to make these science and technology dreams come true — we need incredible leaps in research and development.

Three key interrelated technologies will take NASA where it wants to go: biotechnology, nanotechnology and information technology.

Over the past decade there have been tremendous scientific breakthroughs. And now, we are ready for our technology to move out and incorporate that knowledge.

These new technologies will monitor the health and well-being of our spacecraft and our astronauts, allow our systems to perform many tasks autonomously, and allow systems to evolve and perform new and different functions.

In a sense, these technologies are the key ingredients for our recipe of the future. Without them, we won't rise to the next level of technology capability.

To carry this analogy a step further, no great meal is prepared without a talented chef. And to do the things NASA does, it takes a lot of talented people.

For the first time in almost a decade we intend to hire close to 2000 new employees in the next two years — that's a gain of almost 550 after expected attrition.

When we performed our Zero Based Review, we planned downsizing to 17,500. We also planned to monitor and to evaluate the impact on our people to ensure a safe and vibrant workplace.

To reduce stress levels, improve our skill mix, and address the high number of imminent retirements we are investing $600 million over five years for personnel and facilities. This will strengthen our workforce and make our facilities safer -- including clean-up of the deactivated reactor at Plum Brook, Ohio.

New Partnerships

In addition to employing the best and brightest at NASA, we will augment our strengths through strategic partnerships. We are pursuing new links with research-focused government agencies, high tech industry, progressive aerospace companies and, perhaps most importantly, academia.

And we are strengthening old ties. National Science Foundation Director Rita Colwell has done an incredible job strengthening our nation's commitment to science. So we are pleased to work with her to leverage our respective Agencies' strengths into an even stronger partnership. As just one example, NASA's remote sensing activities will complement the work of NSF's National Ecological Observatory Network.

New Leadership

To emphasize our commitment to new partnerships, I am proud to announce several new appointments. Please stand and be recognized . . . .

Sam Venneri — already NASA's Chief Technologist — will guide our newly integrated Aerospace Technology enterprise and Chief Technology office.

Sam Armstrong having led the revitalization of the Aerospace Technology enterprise will become my Senior Advisor. He will ensure the entire NASA organization executes the new relationships with the partners I mentioned.

Brian Keegan will become our new Chief Engineer. He will lead our efforts to strengthen our engineering foundation and implement our new commitment to Design for Safety.

Orlando Figueroa will become our first Chief Systems Engineer. He will strengthen NASA's systems engineering workforce.

And Dr. Mary Cleave will become the Deputy Associate Administrator for Earth Science. She will lead the second phase planning in the earth observation system.

With this new talent and our investment in the future, NASA will deliver on the promises of discovery and the excitement of exploration for generations to come.

Thank you.

I welcome any questions you may have.